

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A beverage container closure molded from a melt-processible composition ~~for molding closures for beverage containers~~ comprising:

- (a) a thermoplastic base polymeric material;
- (b) ~~a quantity of~~ layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay having platelets with a diameter of approximately 1 micron.

2. (currently amended) The beverage container closure composition of claim 1 wherein said thermoplastic base polymeric material comprises a polyolefin.

3. (currently amended) The beverage container closure composition of claim 2 wherein said polyolefin is selected from the group consisting of polypropylene, polyethylene and a copolymer comprising propylene and ethylene monomeric units.

4. (currently amended) The beverage container closure composition of claim 1 wherein said layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay is montmorillonite clay.

5. (cancelled)

6. (currently amended) A beverage container sealant layer molded from a melt-processible composition ~~for molding sealant layers for beverage~~

~~containers~~ comprising:

- (a) a thermoplastic base polymeric material;
- (b) ~~a quantity of~~ layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay having platelets with a diameter of approximately 1 micron.

7. (currently amended) The beverage container sealant layer composition of claim 7 wherein said thermoplastic base polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of ~~ethylene~~ ethylene vinyl acetate copolymer, polyethylene, styrene ethylene butadiene styrene polymer, styrene butadiene styrene polymer, ethylene propylene diene monomer, and metallocene polymers.

8. (currently amended) The beverage container sealant layer composition of claim 6 wherein said layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay is montmorillonite clay.

9. (cancelled)

10. (currently amended) A method of decreasing the gas permeability of a beverage container closure comprising a thermoplastic material, said method comprising introducing ~~a quantity of~~ layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay to said material.

11. (original) The method of claim 10 wherein said thermoplastic material is a polyolefin.

12. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein

said polyolefin is selected from the group consisting of polypropylene, polyethylene and a copolymer comprising propylene and ethylene monomeric units.

13. (original) The method of claim 10 wherein said layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay is montmorillonite clay.

14. (new) A method of decreasing the gas permeability of a beverage container sealant layer comprising a thermoplastic material, said method comprising introducing layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay to said material.

15. (new) The method of claim 14 wherein said thermoplastic material is selected from the group consisting of ethylene vinyl acetate copolymer, polyethylene, styrene ethylene butadiene styrene polymer, styrene butadiene styrene polymer, ethylene propylene diene monomer, and metallocene polymers.